



# Election Accessibility for People with Disabilities

**JULY 2004**

## Message from Hawaii's Chief Election Officer

To the voters of the State of Hawaii,

The U.S. constitution guarantees every U.S. citizen age 18 and over the right to vote. Our State constitution further defines the right to vote by also requiring voters to be residents of the State of Hawaii and registered to vote in their county of residence.

I am pleased that the State of Hawaii is making great efforts to improve and expand the accessibility of our polling places and elections for all voters, including voters with disabilities.

Hawaii will be one of the first states to utilize electronic ballots, thereby enabling many voters who are blind to cast their first secret ballot ever.

Our 2004 elections will provide equal access and opportunity for all registered voters in the State of Hawaii.



STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS

Dwayne D. Yoshina  
*Chief Election Officer*  
*State of Hawaii, Office of Elections*



## The Help America Vote Act (HAVA)

President George W. Bush signed the Help America Vote Act into law on October 29, 2002. Congress authorized \$3.88 billion in federal money to be distributed to all states for election upgrades, including the purchase of new voting machines, the creation of a statewide voter registration database and other voting improvements. The State of Hawaii received \$5 million, which will be used to improve the administration of elections, including voter education and upgrading voting systems and technology.

## Improving the Access of Polling Places for People with Disabilities

**T**he Help America Vote Act also helps states to establish, expand and improve the access to polling places and elections for people with disabilities. This includes people who are blind and visually impaired, Deaf and hard of hearing, and people who have mobility, emotional and intellectual impairments.

In Hawaii the State Office of Elections and the State Disability and Communication Access Board are working together to improve the accessibility of all polling places for people with disabilities. Improved accessibility includes removing barriers to offer voters with disabilities the same opportunity for access and participation as other voters enjoy.



*Voters who are blind can use the accessible voting machine for an audio, non-visual ballot to cast their vote in a private accessible voting booth.*

**Vote independently  
and in private.**

## Making Polling Places Accessible

**P**olling places on all islands through out the state of Hawaii are being surveyed and checked for barrier-free accessibility for people with mobility and visual impairments. Some of the ways that polling places will be made more accessible for voters with disabilities on Election Day are:

- Relocating the accessible handicapped parking space closer to the polling place entrance.
- Installing portable curb ramps from the accessible parking area to the sidewalk.
- Posting signs directing people to the accessible parking area and to the polling place entrance.
- Leaving doors to the polling place open and having wide aisles inside for easy access for people who use wheelchairs, walkers or crutches.
- Placing cane detectable barriers under protruding objects and stairways along the route to the polling place for people who are blind or have low vision.
- Having accessible voting booths with chairs at all polling places.

## Polling Place Workers are Trained to Assist People with Disabilities

**O**n Election Day the polling places will have workers who are trained on how to assist voters with disabilities and provide good customer service.

- All polling place workers are trained in communicating with and assisting people who are blind and visually impaired, Deaf and hard of hearing, and people with mobility, emotional and intellectual impairments. Workers who are trained in disability etiquette are more effective in assisting all voters.
- All polling places will have a Voter Assistance Official where voters can request special assistance.
- Voters at the polling places may request assistance in having information and the ballot read to them.
- Workers at all polling places are trained to assist voters who are blind to sign the poll book using a signature guide.
- Voters who are blind or have low vision will be offered assistance in getting around inside the polling place.
- People with mobility impairments will be offered to be taken to the head of long voter lines.
- Some of the polling places will have workers skilled in American Sign Language to

serve as interpreters for voters who are Deaf.

## Providing the Same Opportunities for Access and Participation for People with Disabilities

**E**qual access and participation for people with disabilities in the voting process includes being able to vote independently and in private.

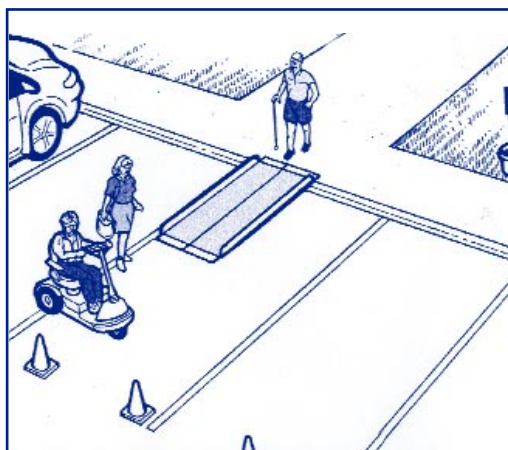
- All polling places will have one accessible voting machine called a Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) voting machine. People with disabilities who use this voting machine will be able to vote independently and in private.
- Voters who are blind or have low vision and use the accessible voting machine can wear headphones to listen to the ballot being read to them. The voter can cast his or her vote by pressing a key or turning a knob that is easy to feel to operate.
- Voters who have difficulty reading and marking the printed



**The 2004  
Elections Will  
Be Held on the  
Following Dates**

**PRIMARY  
ELECTION**  
Saturday  
**SEPT. 18**

**GENERAL  
ELECTION**  
Tuesday  
**Nov. 2**



*Standard parking spaces are made into accessible parking. A temporary curb ramp leads to the accessible route to the polling place.*

paper ballot or have limited use of their hands can use the accessible voting machine for touch screen voting.

- The accessible voting machine will be adaptable for “sip and puff” voting for people with limited or no use of their hands.
- The accessible voting machine will be located in a private accessible voting booth.

## Informing People with Disabilities about the Accessibility of the Elections

In July and August 2004 individuals with disabilities and certain organizations that service people with disabilities will present informational outreach workshops about



general voter education and the accessibility of the elections. These workshops will focus on the below disability groups, however all interested people with disabilities are welcome to attend.

Election accessibility informational outreach workshops are planned for individuals who are:

- Mobility Impaired
- Blind and visually impaired
- Deaf and hard of hearing
- Mentally Ill
- Developmentally disabled

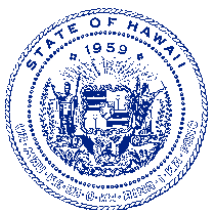
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## INFORMATION

Please call your City/County Clerk's Office on your island if you have questions about voter registration, whether you are registered to vote or where your polling place is located.

<b>City and County of Honolulu</b>	<b>523-4293</b>
<b>County of Hawaii</b>	<b>961-8277</b>
<b>County of Kauai</b>	<b>241-6350</b>
<b>County of Maui</b>	<b>270-7749</b>

You may also call the State of Hawaii, Office of Elections for information and assistance at phone 808-453-VOTE (8683), 808-453-6150 TTY.



**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF ELECTIONS**

### OFFICE OF ELECTIONS

**802 Lehua Avenue • Pearl City, HI 96782**  
**Phone: 808-453-VOTE (8683) • TTY: 808-453-6150**  
**Neighbor Islands Toll Free: 1-800-442-VOTE (8683)**  
**Neighbor Islands TTY Toll Free: 1-800-345-5915**  
**Internet: [www.hawaii.gov/elections](http://www.hawaii.gov/elections)**

This information is available in alternate format by contacting the Office of Elections at phone 808-453-VOTE (8683), 808-453-6150 TTY.